catharsis

By Ahniki

"GO MAKE ONE FRIEND."

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"ONE"

"FRIEND."

I DON'T THINK HE UNDERSTANDS HOW HARD THAT REALLY IS.

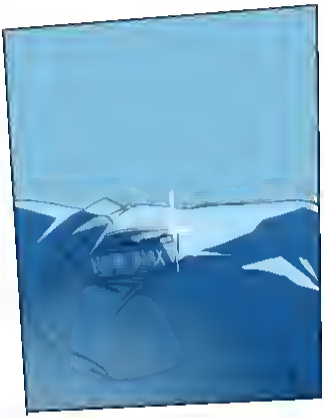
HE MUST HAVE IT EASY MAKING TONS OF FRIENDS BEING THAT COOL...

PFFT.
WHAT FRIENDS?
ACHOO!

WELL, I'LL DO MY BEST... I MEAN, THIS IS COMING FROM A GUY WHO HAS "WON MORE THAN ONCE."
NANA! YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE TO SCHOOL!
SORRY, DAD! I'LL BE OUT IN A SEC!

BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT...

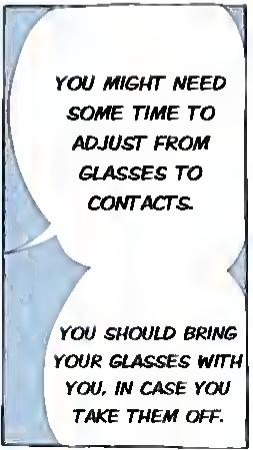
--BEING AS COOL AS HE WAS IN FRONT OF ME...



HOW COULD I NOT WANT TO BE LIKE HIM?

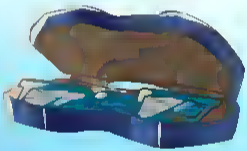
I THINK I GOT THE SCARF PATTERN RIGHT…

HERE, NANA. YOUR MOM PICKED UP YOUR NEW CONTACTS LAST NIGHT.


YOU MIGHT NEED SOME TIME TO ADJUST FROM GLASSES TO CONTACTS.
YOU SHOULD BRING YOUR GLASSES WITH YOU, IN CASE YOU TAKE THEM OFF.

IT'S OKAY, DAD.

THEY'RE JUST CONTACTS. HOW BAD COULD THEY BE? I'LL GET USED TO THEM IN NO TIME.

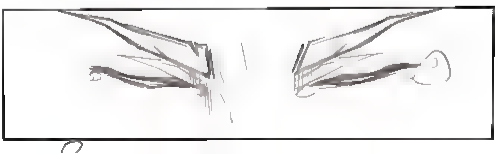


SHUT

BYE!
OPEN

OH...

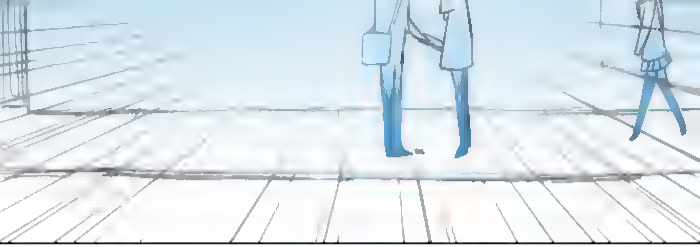
I MADE A BIG MISTAKE. MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT MY GLASSES WITH ME...



OWW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW
M-MY EYES!
IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE NORMAL?! IS THIS WHAT PEOPLE WITH CONTACTS ENDURE EVERY TIME?!
IT FEELS LIKE MY EYES ARE DRYING OUT!

I'M STARTING TO GET A HEADACHE TOO! ....REGRETS....

I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO MY DAD. CRAP. I SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT MY GLASSES.
HM?



THAT GUY IN THE BRIGHT RED SCARF...

OH!

HE'S THE ONE MY DAD AND I SAW IN THE PAPERS.

(I GUESS HE GREW HIS HAIR OUT?)

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO RUN INTO HIM AT ALL. WHAT A SURPRISE.

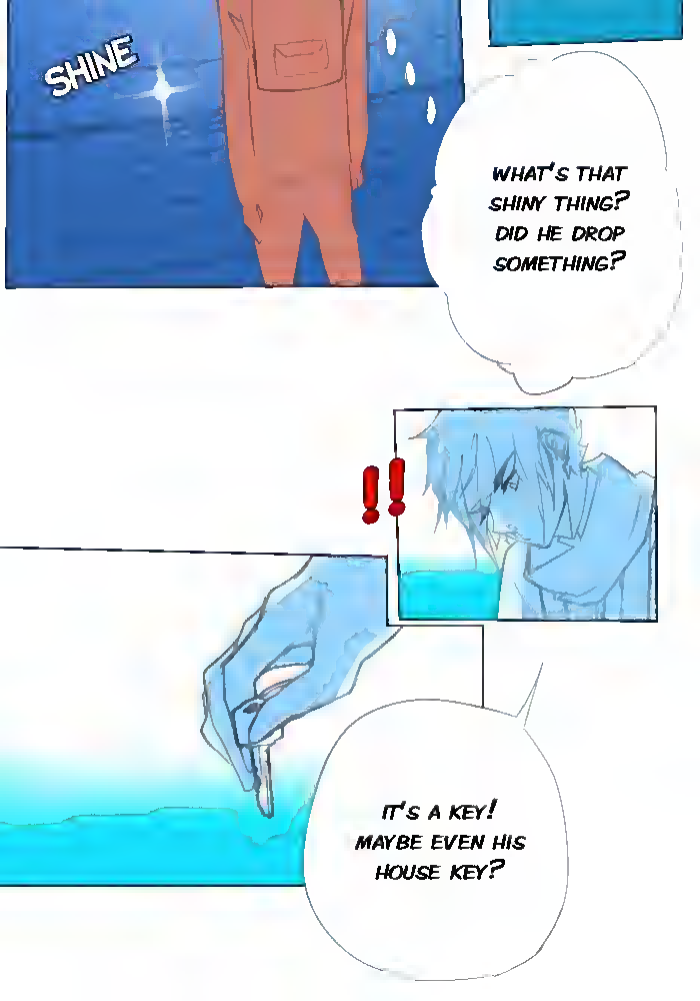
(HONESTLY, I THOUGHT HE WOULD BE FLOCKED WITH NEWS REPORTERS AND PEOPLE FOR BEING A HERO.)

I WONDER IF IT WOULD BE WEIRD IF I SAID HI?

OH... NEVERMIND. HE'S LEAVING.

SHINE

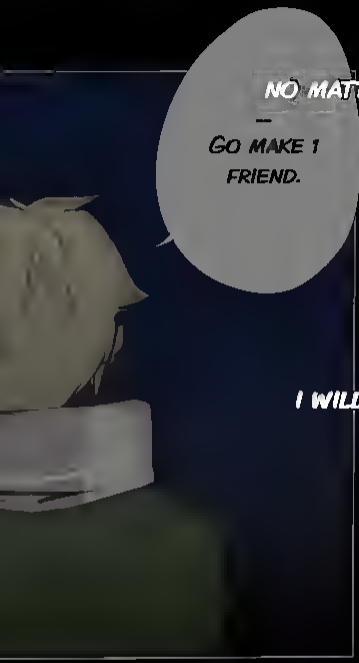
?


SHINE
WHAT'S THAT SHINY THING? DID HE DROP SOMETHING?
!!
IT'S A KEY! MAYBE EVEN HIS HOUSE KEY?

I'LL GO RETURN THIS TO HIM!

I'LL USE THIS CHANCE TO SPEAK WITH HIM WITHOUT SEEMING WEIRD!

FRIENDSHIP!



I WILL DO THIS ONE THING!

I WILL WIN!
(SO TO SPEAK)

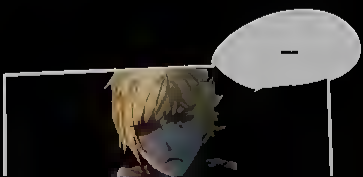
BUT. AGAIN...
EASIER SAID THAN DONE.

BY THE TIME I FINISHED DAYDREAMING MY GOAL, HE WAS LONG GONE. I COULD ONLY HOPE THAT I RUN INTO HIM AGAIN BY LUCK.

I ENDED UP REMOVING MY CONTACTS WHEN I GOT INSIDE THE BUILDING.

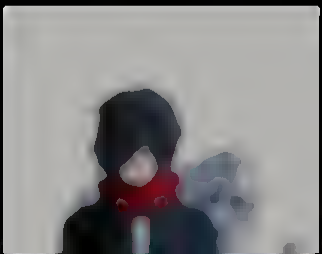
MY EYES BURNED SO BADLY, AND I COULDN'T SEE AT ALL. THIS RESULTED IN SQUINTING HARDER THAN EVER BEFORE.

MY PLAN TO MAKE A FRIEND SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS POINT. I LOST SIGHT OF THAT HERO GUY AND MADE MYSELF LOOK LIKE I WAS OUT TO KILL.

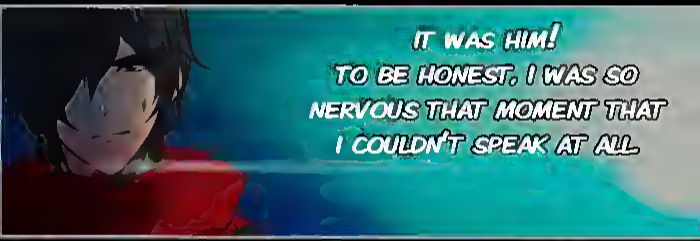


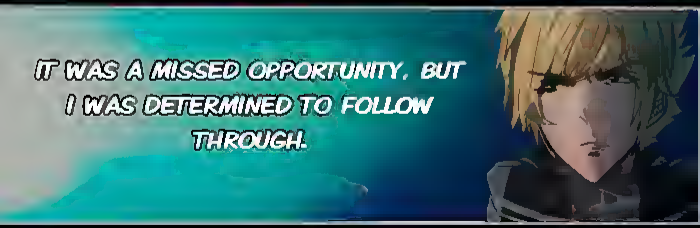
I WAS SO DISAPPOINTED, AND THE DAY JUST STARTED.

...UNTIL I REALIZED A FAMILIAR SILHOUETTE WITH A BRIGHT RED ACCENT AROUND HIS NECK. HE SAT IN A DESK BEFORE ME IN THE CLASSROOM I WAS ENROLLED IN.



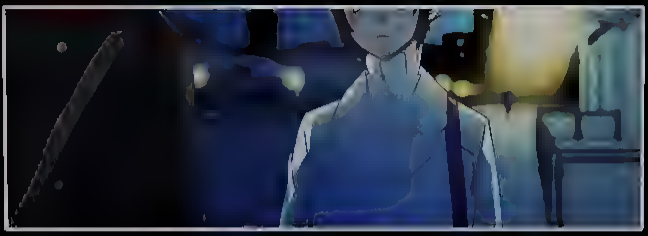
I COULDN'T REALLY BELIEVE IT UNTIL I GOT A CLOSER LOOK AT HIS FACE.



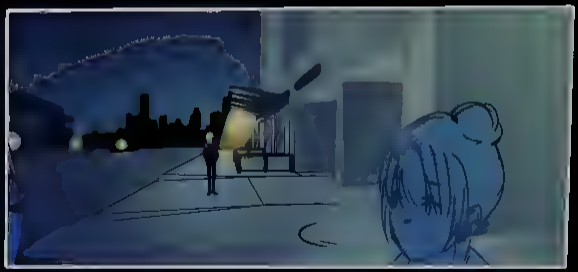


I HAD TO SUMMON UP COURAGE TO RETURN HIS

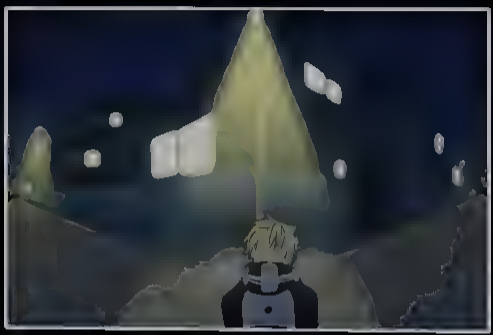
KEY. (IF IT REALLY IS HIS KEY.)



EVEN IF IT WASN'T, I BELIEVED IT WAS STILL A GOOD CHANCE TO SPEAK WITH HIM!



I WASN'T EVEN SURE IF I WAS DOING THIS "FRIEND MAKING" CORRECTLY.



ALL I KNEW WAS THAT I HAD TO TRY MY BEST.

TO MAKE A FRIEND.

<END OF JOHAN'S SIDE STORY!>

I'm sorry this arc took long! Thank you for being patient with me and reading up to this point! I've honestly missed drawing Leon and am excited to bring him back already!

Also, special shout out to Catharsis fans who met me at Anime Expo this year! To Monita, Catherine, Irelia, and Arnae, it was such a pleasure meeting you! (Sorry if I spelled your names wrong. I should have asked how to spell it right there and then.)

-Ahniki